

106TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. RES. 217

Relating to the freedom of belief, expression, and association in the People's Republic of China.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

NOVEMBER 2, 1999

Mr. HUTCHINSON submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

RESOLUTION

Relating to the freedom of belief, expression, and association in the People's Republic of China.

Whereas the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights affirm the freedoms of thought, conscience, religion, expression, and assembly as fundamental human rights belonging to all people;

Whereas the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights is a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations, including the People's Republic of China, a member of the United Nations;

Whereas the People's Republic of China has signed the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights but has yet to ratify the treaty and thereby make it legally binding;

Whereas the Constitution of the People's Republic of China provides for the freedom of religious belief and the freedom not to believe;

Whereas according to the Department of State and international human rights organizations, the Government of the People's Republic of China does not provide these freedoms but continues to restrict unregistered religious activities and persecutes persons on the basis of their religious practice through measures including harassment, prolonged detention, physical abuse, incarceration, and police closure of places of worship;

Whereas under the International Religious Freedom Act, the Secretary of State has designated the People's Republic of China as a country of special concern;

Whereas the Government of the People's Republic of China has issued a decree declaring a wide range of activities illegal and subject to prosecution, including distribution of Falun Gong materials, gatherings or silent sit-ins, marches or demonstrations, and other activities to promote Falun Gong and has begun the trials of several Falun Gong practitioners;

Whereas the National People's Congress of the People's Republic of China on October 30, 1999, adopted a new law banning and criminalizing groups labeled by the Government of the People's Republic of China as cults; and

Whereas the Government of the People's Republic of China has officially labeled the Falun Gong meditation group a cult and has formally charged at least four members of the Falun Gong under this new law: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate calls on the Government
2 of the People's Republic of China to—

3 (1) release all prisoners of conscience and put
4 an immediate end to the harassment, detention,
5 physical abuse, and imprisonment of Chinese citizens
6 exercising their legitimate rights to free belief, ex-
7 pression, and association; and

8 (2) demonstrate its willingness to abide by
9 internationally accepted norms of freedom of belief,
10 expression, and association by repealing or amending
11 laws and decrees that restrict those freedoms and
12 proceeding promptly to ratify and implement the
13 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

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